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"Compromise is Impossible."

In a recent issue of *THE COMMONER*, referring to the steel strike, it was said "It is undoubtedly the purpose of the trust to destroy labor organizations, and the purpose will be relentlessly pursued if the time seems propitious." This statement obtains candid corroboration by no less an authority than Henry Clews, the Wall Street banker.

In his weekly letter, issued under date of July 20, Mr. Clews discusses the steel strike. Mr. Clews refers to this strike as the "crucial conflict," and declares:

"The strike against the steel corporation is the boldest challenge with which labor has ever confronted capital; and it would seem that the last thing that the trust can afford is to show any timidity or evince any disposition towards concession to the present arbitrary demand, beyond the fair and liberal spirit already shown. Any spirit of conciliation shown by capital under present conditions can, from the very nature of things, have no other effect than to stimulate aggression from labor, and the recent large voluntary advances in wages have undoubtedly had that result. Compromise between the two sides is impossible; either the one party or the other must hold a distinct ascendancy of power; and it would seem that we are verging upon the crisis which will determine where the victory shall rest."

This does not resemble the statements made by Mr. Clews and his fellow banker politicians in the campaign of 1900. Then we were told that the interests of capital and labor were identical, and that the great corporations which had been permitted to grow fat by the favor of the republican party and at the expense of the people of the United States were fully alive to the requirements of the laboring man. We were told that the wages of the laborer would keep pace with the profits of the great corporation by which he was employed. And yet at this moment when these corporations are thriving as they never thrived before, their employees find it necessary to engage in a strike in order to obtain even the right of organization; and Mr. Clews informs us that "compromise between the two sides is impossible." He no longer insists that the interests of labor and capital are identical, but declares that either the one party or the other must hold "a distinct ascendancy of power."

It is difficult for some to understand why these great corporations—after having obtained at the hands of the government favors and privileges by which they are enabled to roll up enormous profits on comparatively small investment of capital—refuse to grant to their employees fair privileges. It is strange that in the hope of maintaining for the corporations the special privileges they enjoy, the corporation managers do not increase the pay and the wages of their employees toward at least a frac-

tion of the prosperity enjoyed by the employer. The employer who pays good wages and gives his employee decent privileges obtains better results from the investment he makes in wages than the employer who is continually looking for the best of the immediate bargain between himself and his workingmen. And when it is seen that the special privileges enjoyed by these corporations are possible only through acquiescence of the people when they go to the ballot box, some find it difficult to understand why these large employers of men do not make serious effort to keep their employees in a contented frame of mind.

Can it be possible that the same characteristic that prompts men to seek dishonest advantages at the hands of a government persuades them to seek dishonest advantages over the individual whose labor contributes to their fortune?

Can it be possible that when a man steels his conscience so that he is enabled to aid in the purchase of elections, to buy members of congress, to bribe men high in authority, to subsidize those newspapers that will do his bidding and destroy through the power of money those newspapers whose editors refuse to "bend the pregnant hinges of the knee that thrift may follow fawning"—can it be possible that when a man stifles the "still small voice" in order that he may do these things he loses consideration for all other men and for all other things, overlooks the responsibilities that may confront him in the future and takes cognizance only of the immense advantages and opportunities of the present?

This appears to be so, and yet those who are inclined to regard this as madness will realize considerable method in the madness when it is remembered that the best possible way in which to perpetually maintain class advantage is to keep the laboring men of the country in a position of serfdom. With the labor organizations destroyed the only hope the laboring man will have for redress will be the tender mercy of the trust magnate. And in order to put this "mercy" into operation it will be necessary for the laboring man to vote as his employer votes.

Those who have flattered themselves that the advocates of the single gold standard and of the trust system were sincere when they claimed that labor and capital should work in harmony may have their eyes opened by the frank admission of Mr. Clews. "Compromise between the two sides is impossible; either the one or the other must hold a distinct ascendancy of power." This, then, is the doctrine of those who see nothing but good in the republican party, and nothing but evil in every party that opposes republican principles. The claim that the interests of capital and labor are iden-

tical, and that there must be harmony between the two is a claim to be urged for campaign purposes only. The naked truth, according to these representatives of "national honor," according to these "advance agents of prosperity," is that the trusts of the country must hold the whip over their employees at all times in order that the trust may be preserved and that the enormous privileges of large corporations may be maintained.

And yet in the face of these facts, in the presence of these conditions, there are thousands upon thousands of laboring men in the United States who sleep on, and refuse to have their eyes opened to the fact that every election on which they fail to register their protest against the republican party is a neglected opportunity.

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Emasculating Democracy.

In real Democracy there is throbbing, ever-present life. There is nothing more vigorous and virile than Democracy when it stands for the rule of the people—the right of the people to control their own government and the capacity of the people for self-government. Democracy in an open fight need not fear either aristocracy—the rule of the best (as the few style themselves) or plutocracy the rule of the rich. In an honest fight Democracy can rely with confidence upon the righteousness of its cause and trust the conscience and intelligence of the people. Victory may be delayed, but it cannot be prevented if the Democratic party remains steadfast in its support of Democratic principles. The greatest danger which confronts Democracy today is that it will be emasculated and robbed of its force and vitality by those who cling to the Democratic name but constantly give aid and comfort to the republican party. For the purpose of illustration three daily papers may be mentioned. They loudly proclaim their loyalty to Democratic principles and roundly condemn those who were responsible for the Chicago platform. They deserted the party in 1896 and supported the Palmer and Buckner ticket—a ticket that polled about one hundred and thirty thousand votes, all told, and carried one precinct in the United States. They gave a protesting support to the national ticket in 1900 and ever since the election have been industriously at work "reorganizing" the Democratic party. The papers referred to are the New York World, the Louisville Courier-Journal and the Chicago Chronicle. Each paper is the best representative of its class in the section in which it circulates.

On the money question all three support the republican position; they are mouth pieces